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CNV Fall 2016

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Community News and Views

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The 2016 Innovate Michigan! Summit Recap



Johnathan M. Holifield presenting to Summit participants about inclusive economic development.

By: Lauren Ross, Special Projects Coordinator, rosslau1@msu.edu

The fifth annual Innovate Michigan! Summit was held on Wednesday, September 7th, 2016. In total, there were more than 100 attendees from academia, economic development, public and private sector organizations. Summit participants were very fortunate to receive an opening statement from Senator Gary Peters, and to host [Mr. Johnathan M. Holifield](#) as its keynote speaker. Mr. Holifield discussed the issue of inclusive growth in economic development.

REI also hosted three professors, one from Wayne State University, one from the University of Michigan, and one from Michigan State University who discussed their experiences [guiding students working with communities](#).

The day after the Summit, September 8th, REI hosted the annual EDA University Center Showcase for the Chicago Region. Each year, the various University Centers (UC) come together, sharing the past year's work and successes. This year, UC's from Minnesota, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Wisconsin attended the Showcase.

Urban Core Mayors



Urban Core Mayor members at our May meeting. From left to right: Mayor of Ann Arbor Christopher Taylor, Detroit Chief Government Affairs Officer Lisa Howze, Mayor of Kalamazoo Bobby Hopewell, Mayor of Grand Rapids Rosalynn Bliss and Mayor of Dearborn Jack O'Reilly

By: Arnold Weinfeld, MSU UOE, Director of Urban Policy Initiatives, weinfel8@msu.edu

Since 1994, the MSU Center for Community and Economic Development (CCED) has worked with a group of Michigan mayor's known as the "Urban Core Mayors." The group itself was formed in 1992 as a statewide forum through which the Mayors of Michigan's core cities come together discussing issues of mutual concern and the development and implementation of policies and programs to improve urban communities.

The Urban Core Mayors (UCM) represent Ann Arbor, Battle Creek, Bay City, Dearborn, Detroit, Flint, Grand Rapids, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Lansing, Muskegon, Pontiac and Saginaw. The MSU CCED helps facilitate UCM meetings, including but not limited to, coordinating communication, hosting educational events and sharing relevant research findings.

On September 26th, the Governor's Commission on Infrastructure presented to the UCM and discussed how the Commission would create its long term comprehensive recommendations for improving Michigan's infrastructure by November 30th, 2016. The commission has a lot of work ahead of them. Michigan received a "D" grade on the American Society of Civil Engineers' report of care on state infrastructures.

In order to complete it work in such a short time frame, the commission has engaged technical experts in infrastructure to inform its work. They have also held a series of public forums and stakeholder discussions throughout the state, in effort to better understand current infrastructure needs and conditions. The commission also analyzes leading practices nationally and internationally to find the best potential solutions to recommend.

There are no secrets. All of our infrastructure sectors need investment. The key is deciding how to invest and ensure, through proper funding and policy at the state and local level, we build a 21st century infrastructure system for our state. All of which starts with our communities. The Urban Core Mayors will play an important role in working together with key local and state stakeholders to review and implement recommendations of the Commission.

MSU REI Funding Announcement



By: Jennifer Bruen, MSU REI, Project Coordinator, bruenjen@msu.edu

The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) awarded the Michigan State University Center for Community and Economic Development (CCED) a \$750,000 University Center grant. It will be used to create, identify and implement innovative regional economic development tools and strategies to expand business opportunities, creating new jobs across Michigan.

The MSU CCED, located within University Outreach and Engagement (UOE) in the Office of the Provost, has worked with hundreds of communities in Michigan for nearly 50 years. The CCED developed a number of innovative initiatives in partnership with EDA and Michigan's EDDs, while operating an [EDA University Center \(REI\)](#) for the last five

years. A variety of departments, colleges, and units within MSU-the College of Social Science; College of Communication Arts & Sciences; Office of the Vice President for Research & Graduate Studies; Office of the Provost; School of Planning, Design and Construction; Office of the Associate Provost for University Outreach and Engagement; and MSU Extension-have made commitments to support REI's work, providing access to their expertise, resources, research centers, faculty, students, and more.

REI successfully established relationships with a variety of partners that work with REI and benefit from collaboration on [Co-Learning and Student-Led, Faculty-Guided projects](#), conducting research and creating and identifying new economic development strategies. Partners include University of Michigan, Wayne State University, Northern Michigan University, University of Michigan-Flint, Washtenaw Community College, Grand Valley State University and Madonna University, regional planning organizations such as SEMCOG, TCRPC, EMCOG, SWMPC, WMRPC, WMSRDC, EUPRPDC, MAR, etc., MSHDA, Detroit Economic Growth Association (DEGA), entrepreneurs, Red Ink Flint, Michigan Corps, Generation E Institute, inventors (Michigan Inventors Coalition), workforce development groups (Detroit Training Center), arts (Shop Floor Theater Co.), Connect Michigan, local governments (City of Flint, City of Grand Rapids), Northern Initiatives, Microenterprise Network of Michigan, MSU College of Agriculture & Natural Resources and many more. From 2011-2016, REI supported nearly 100 projects responsible for more than \$60 million in additional public and private investments. Additionally, REI successfully disseminated new knowledge through the creation and sharing of nearly 50 webinars and videos, more than 65 in-person presentations at five Innovate Michigan! Summits and in the fall of 2015, REI was recognized as a finalist in the University Economic Development Association's Awards of Excellence program.

In supporting innovation, REI will adopt a new program called REI "Innovation Fellows". Designed to expand co-implementation efforts, new Innovation Fellows will be recruited by REI, its partners, EDDs, and past Co-Learning Plan authors. Innovation Fellows-assisted by REI-will lead, organize, translate and support a community or region in taking the next steps to implement a previously completed Co-Learning Plan. These prestigious Innovation Fellows will work to increase the rate of implementation of innovative economic development strategies. REI looks forward to working with new Innovation Fellows in addition to its continued work in community and economic development across Michigan.

Domicology: There's a Better Place For That Building Than the Dump

By: Lauren Ross, Special Projects Coordinator, MSU CCED, rosslau1@msu.edu



Every year, Michiganders throw away more than 11 million tons of waste in landfills, according to a report conducted by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality in 2013. Although recent years have seen an emphasis on improving recycling programs around the state, they have also seen federal dollars allocated to blight removal. Because the funding stipulates that a certain number of properties must be addressed in a short period of time, the actual result of that funding has meant that more building materials are ending up in landfills as well.

As of MDEQ's fiscal year 2015 report, the amount of solid waste ending up in landfills had increased nearly a million tons, to just over 12 million. We have to ask ourselves: how can the state and federal authorities encourage more recycling and environmental sustainability, meanwhile pushing for the quick demolition of blighted properties? There is a [better way](#), and it has to do with deconstructing these blighted and abandoned structures. It takes more time, yes; it takes more money, yes. But the social, environmental, and economic benefits outweigh those costs.

The process of deconstructing a home requires more labor than simply demolishing it, and the materials must be sorted and processed, creating jobs. Those jobs generate taxable income, creating revenue for the state to spend on infrastructure improvements (like roads). Once the materials obtained through the process of deconstruction are sold, they pay for the process and also generate a net profit.

According to estimates by the Architectural Salvage Warehouse in Detroit, an average home costs roughly \$35,000 to deconstruct. The value of the materials recovered from that home, like structural and architectural lumber, bricks, window frames and more, when resold is between approximately \$45,000 and \$90,000. That's a potential 2:1 return on investment. Based on quarterly reporting by Step Forward Michigan, the median amount of assistance being provided by the Hardest Hit Funds to demolish a home, on the other hand, is roughly \$10,000 - without any consideration of material reuse. An entire, sustainable economic sector could possibly exist in Michigan if a more reasoned approach to demolition were pursued.

The MSU Center for Community and Economic Development is conducting a study of this potential economic sector, and has found that tipping fees (the cost to put garbage in a landfill) in Michigan are some of the lowest in the nation. There is also no policy addressing the use of recycled materials in new construction; by way of contrast, California requires that all new construction contain a percentage of materials from recycled content. If such a policy were adopted in Michigan, it would drive demand for those products,

which would in turn increase the incentive for supply, making developers and contractors think twice before throwing unused materials in the garbage.

Another crucial component to this equation is federal funding. It should be no surprise that the money going to deal with blight has come from the taxpayer. We often think of federal funding as a beacon of hope shining down from the sky, like a savior. But let us not forget that the federal government gets its money from the taxpayer, and so it is often the communities affected by blight who end up having to pay to remove it.

And let us also not forget the consequences of blight on surrounding home values; a report by Temple University Center for Public Policy & Eastern Pennsylvania Organizing Project estimates that properties within 450 feet of an abandoned property lose anywhere from \$3,500 to \$7,600 of their value. And so the community ends up paying the price once again for those abandoned properties.

The current system for dealing with blight is an unsustainable one, relying on the taxpayer to pick up the pieces of economic crises. Policymakers and economic developers on the state and federal levels alike need to look closely at how these dollars are being allocated, the efficiency of their spending and the long-term effects of the activities being funded.

They also need to consider what policies may be contributing to blight, and how to prevent it in the future. This could look something like building developers or corporations paying an up-front tax for the removal of their structure once it has reached the end of its life cycle; but that is a conversation for another day.

Muskegon Feasibility Study

By: Lauren Ross, Special Projects Coordinator, MSU CCED, rosslau1@msu.edu

In September 2015, the U.S. EDA awarded a \$223,000 grant to the MSU Center for Community and Economic Development (CCED) and [West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission](#) (WMSRDC) to conduct a feasibility study. The study will determine the feasibility of creating an economic sector in Muskegon, MI focused around the recycling and repurposing of materials obtained through the process of deconstructing abandoned structures throughout the Great Lakes region. The feasibility study stems from years of research on structural abandonment and its consequences, not only on surrounding property values, but also more broadly on the environment and economy.

The research team has worked very hard over the past few months collecting the necessary data, and providing periodic updates to the Advisory Committee. On July 26, 2016 the team visited Muskegon for "Port Day," a celebration of the unique capacities that the Port of Muskegon offers; WMSRDC has also been working with national consulting firm, Martin Associates, on a study to determine the current and future capacities for the port. The feasibility study is nearing completion, and will be available on both the CCED and Domicology websites once published.

Also in July-the emerging field-[Domicology](#) was featured in [Bridge Magazine](#). The article informed the public of the problems associated with blight and demolition, to gauge the public's interest on the topic, as well as raise awareness of the ongoing feasibility study. The overall response to the article was positive; several readers commented, it was shared on various social media platforms, and was featured on [WKAR's Current State](#).

The Domicology website recently received a makeover, be sure to check out all of the new features at [domicology.msu.edu/!](http://domicology.msu.edu/)



Contemporary Issues Institute: Rebuilding Broken Civic Trust

By: Madison Sorsen, MSU CCED, Research Assistant, sorsenma@msu.edu

The MSU Center for Community and Economic Development (CCED) hosts a Contemporary Issues Institute, centered on an emerging issue in community and economic development. In light of the Flint water crisis, recent controversies over police brutality and the 2016 presidential election, CCED chose to focus this year's institute on the timely issue of, "Rebuilding Broken Civic Trust."

CCED formed a Contemporary Issues Institute Advisory Committee that will plan an event designed to rebuild trust in communities across the state. Some of which suffer from historical trauma, economic inequalities, and racial inequalities, exacerbating existing distrust in public institutions. Representative democracy requires a fundamental trusting relationship between the people and the public institutions charged with pursuing the public good. Due to the nature of a democracy, trust proves itself essential. Democracies gain their legitimate right to rule from the consent of its citizens. When governments violate trust or disregard the concerns of constituents, they lose the consent of the governed. Therefore, losing their legitimacy as a governing institution.

Trust is vital pragmatically as well. It, "enables cooperative behavior, promotes adaptive organization forms, such as network relations, reduces harmful conflict, decreases transaction costs, facilitates rapid formulation of ad hoc work groups, and promotes effective responses to crisis" (Burt, Camerer, Rousseau, & Rousseau, 1998). Trust makes people feel more secure in their environment, which in turn allows people to live more fulfilling lives. The MSU CCED and the Contemporary Issues Institute Advisory Committee hope to use the Contemporary Issues Institute to bring insight to those working in fields that require the trust of the broader public to start rebuilding trust.

For additional information, please visit ced.msu.edu.

MSU CCED Hosts Grosse Pointe South Intern



Multicultural Apprentice Student, Demetrius Ford.

By: Lauren Ross, MSU CCED, Special Projects Coordinator, rosslau1@msu.edu

In June, CCED had the privilege of hosting Grosse Pointe South High School student Demetrius Ford. Mr. Ford was participating in the Multicultural Apprenticeship Program through the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. MAP offers high school sophomores and juniors an opportunity to explore their academic interests while experiencing the college lifestyle. During the six-week program, students engage in a research project in a field of their choosing.

Mr. Ford expressed a strong interest in landscape architecture, and presented on his experience at the conclusion of the program on July 29, 2016. CCED wishes Mr. Ford the best in the pursuit of his passions, and sincerely hopes he enjoyed his time with us.

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